

RiverWatch

Online

Memphis District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

BUILDING STRONG®

Essential, timely communication with a purpose

Issue #2 - January 14, 2011

Ecosystem restoration

Wetland mitigation putting finishing touches on NW Tennessee Harbor

by Jim Pogue

Chief, Public Affairs Office

Although the lion's share of the work on the Northwest Tennessee Harbor Project near Tiptonville in Lake County is finished, Memphis District team members are now ensuring the work meets requirements for environmental sustainability.

"When the project was constructed, about 75 acres of wetland in the harbor footprint were impacted," Andrea Carpenter, Memphis District fish and wildlife biologist said. "To compensate for this we are now converting 160 acres of cropland acquired for this purpose back to wetlands to mitigate for that impact."



Kevin Pigott photo

Carpenter went on to detail the work our hired labor crew, led by Matt Pierce, is now doing. They include:

"Degrading" or lowering two, 100-foot-long sections of what had once been a private levee. This will allow seasonal high water to flood the property and reestablish it as a wetland.



Kevin Pigott photo

Plugging seven field ditches with riprap stone to slow drainage from the property.

Workers are also installing a large chute to redirect drainage. This will allow water to back up into the mitigation area without flooding adjacent properties.

Finally, planting about 60,000 cypress and bottomland hardwood tree saplings on the property to help restore the natural functioning of the acreage as a wetland in the winter of 2009.

District biologist Kevin Pigott is working with Carpenter on the project and said the 160 acres of mitigation land were acquired by the local sponsor, the Northwest Tennessee Regional Port Authority.

"The Corps will monitor the land, particularly following any storm events or high water, to ensure it is functioning as we intend it to," Pigott said. "At the end of the monitoring period, if the mitigation is deemed successful, the intent of the interagency team is to turn the land over to the Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency to manage."

That interagency team includes the Northwest Tennessee Regional Port Authority, the Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the Environmental Protection Agency, the Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency and the Memphis District.

"Good coordination and cooperation by the interagency team has been central to the success of this work," Pigott said. "It has allowed us to identify problems early and take the necessary actions to stay on schedule."



Kevin Pigott photo

Other Memphis District hired labor employees working on the project include Roy Wellington (foreman), Ervin "Earl" Washington (equipment operator), Robert "Junior" Smith (equipment operator) and Willie Daniel (crane operator).

Carpenter said she expects them to complete the construction by the end of January.

If you would like to comment about this article, please email [Jim Pogue](#) or [Cheryl Ramsey](#).

[Home](#)[Next](#)**Section 508 Disclaimer**

If you have difficulty accessing any material on this site because of a disability, please feel free to contact us in writing or via telephone and we will work with you to make the information available.



Public Affairs Office - Local: (901) 544-3005 - Toll free: (800) 317-4156

District Commander: Col. Vernie L. Reichling, Jr.

Chief, Public Affairs: Jim Pogue - Public Affairs Specialists: Brenda Beasley and Cheryl Ramsey

Acting RiverWatch Magazine Editor: Travis Cooper

RiverWatch Online Editor: Cheryl Ramsey